



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Auto Theft Arrest**

**SANTA BARBARA, CA – March 12, 2013**

David Daniel Peterson, age 26, of unincorporated Santa Barbara, was arrested for auto theft with a prior conviction, a felony, and destruction of evidence and resisting or delaying an officer, both misdemeanors, following an incident where Peterson stole a car after observing the owner leave the keys in the vehicle. With the assistance of GM OnStar officers recovered the stolen vehicle and arrested Peterson nearby.

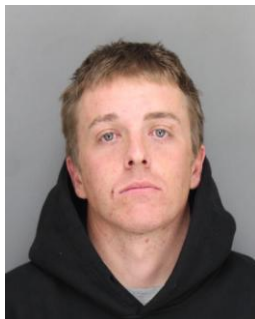
On March 9, 2013, at 7:50 a.m., SBPD Officer Kyle Crooks and Officer Rob Castro responded to a call of an auto theft that had just occurred at McDonald's Restaurant at 3940 State Street. Upon arrival they contacted the victim who stated that his new 2013 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck, valued at \$38,000.00, had just been stolen. Inside the bed of the truck was approximately \$2,000.00 worth of tools. The victim stated that he had left the keys to the truck on the driver's seat while he went into the restaurant to order food. He returned approximately four minutes later to discover that his truck was gone.

The victim advised the officers that his vehicle was equipped with the GM OnStar safety, navigation, and communication service. The officers instructed the victim to contact OnStar, which he did; and OnStar was able to locate the vehicle. OnStar provided information about the stolen vehicle's whereabouts to the SBPD Combined Communications Center, which subsequently relayed that information to officers in the field. Following updates from OnStar, Officer Crooks and Officer Castro were led to the area of Foothill Road and Mission Canyon Road where they spotted the stolen truck being driven westbound on Foothill Road. As the stolen vehicle passed Officer Crooks, who was travelling in the opposing direction, the driver, Peterson, tried to obscure his face from view. Officer Crooks and Officer Castro turned to follow the vehicle, which was last seen turning north onto Cheltenham Road. OnStar informed the officers that the vehicle was on 800 Windsor Way and they found it there, abandoned at the end of the street. The officers were met by several residents who informed them that Peterson had just run onto the property of one of the houses there. Officer Crooks and Officer Castro searched the area and found Peterson crawling through the brush on one of the hillside properties and arrested him at gunpoint. Once Peterson was in custody it was discovered that he was on probation and had several past convictions for auto theft.

Following his arrest Peterson was cooperative. He revealed that at the time of the incident he had been sitting outside of McDonald's when he saw the victim exit his truck without keys in hand and took advantage of the opportunity to steal the car. He drove away in the vehicle north on Highway 154, ultimately discarding the tools that were in the back of the truck on West Camino Cielo. Peterson said he did this because he felt the presence of the tools might identify the truck to law enforcement as the one that had been stolen. While discarding the property Peterson also found the newly issued California license plates for the car on the back seat and subsequently affixed one to the rear of the truck, replacing the paper dealer plate that had been there, for the same reason. Peterson said he then continued driving the vehicle, ultimately with the intention of going home. However, while driving on Mission Canyon Road he saw Officer Castro and then a moment later Officer Crooks, and realized that he needed to abandon the truck if he was to avoid getting into trouble. He drove onto Windsor Way, left the car at the dead end, ran away on foot, and attempted to hide in the brush on one of the residential properties there.

During the investigation Peterson led Officer Castro back to the location on West Camino Cielo where he had discarded the victim's tools. They, along with the truck, were returned to the victim. Peterson was booked into Santa Barbara County Jail on the aforementioned charges, with a bail amount of \$30,000.00, and also on a no-bail detainer for violation of probation.

The Santa Barbara Police Department would like to remind everyone that when parking in public, please keep your car doors locked, your valuables out of sight, and your keys in your pocket!



Peterson , David Daniel

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